

HARMONY FIRE DISTRICT

P.O. Box 360 – 194 Putnam Pike
Harmony, R.I. 02829

The regularly scheduled monthly meeting of the Harmony Fire District Executive Board was held at the Harmony Fire Station on **Thursday, August 16, 2012.**

Present: Moderator – Raymond Fogarty, Jr.; Chief Stuart Pearson;
Treasurer – Sandra Owens; Tax Collector/Clerk – Kimberly Barber;
Board Members – Louise Michaels, George Kain & James Richards;
Attorney – Fred Mason, Jr.

Absent: Board Member – Milton Huston (excused);
Association Representative – Linda Ferragamo, President (excused)

I. – Meeting Called to Order: 7:01 pm by Moderator Fogarty.

II. - Approval of the minutes from the May 17th meeting.

Moderator Fogarty asked the board if there were any discrepancies to note on the minutes from the May 17th meeting. If there are no corrections, he would like to call for a motion to accept them.

Louise made a motion to accept the minutes. George seconded the motion.
The motion carried unanimously.

III. – Approval of Bills:

A check register of bills to be paid was provided to all board members in their folder. Moderator Fogarty asked if there were any comments or questions on these expenses. If not, he would like to call for a motion to accept them.

Kim noted that the large bill being paid to Cybersystems for \$8,000+ was for the new pagers.

Louise asked if we get a reduced rate from Verizon versus using Cox. Kim said that she had just recently actually asked Cox to give us a quote to compare the two. Cox did come back cheaper. Louise suggested contacting Verizon and asking them to match the quote Cox gave her. Sandy said she agreed and that it would be easier to stay with Verizon and not have to change our e-mails and everything. Kim said she would look into it.

Jim made a motion to approve the bills. Louise seconded the motion.
The motion carried unanimously.

IV. - Treasurer's Report:

Sandy gave Treasurer's Reports for May and June.

Beginning balance May 1st \$375,848.20 and ending balance May 31st \$378,812.38. Bills in May were fairly routine.

Beginning balance June 1st \$378,812.38 and ending balance June 30th \$322,481.48. This is an unaudited figure for year-end. Sandy noted that the third party billing revenue total for the fiscal year-end was over \$122,000. She believes that this is due to good record keeping and excellent billing. The year-end figure for tax revenue was \$449,000. As for expenses you will notice that all of the salary expenses are over for the year. This is due to there being 53 pay periods instead of 52. Also the Radio expense account shows as a negative due to the reappropriation of funds not being made in the budget column. The other reappropriation will also be corrected and Sandy will e-mail the board a corrected June expense sheet for their records.

Ray mentioned the Truck Fund balance, which is now at \$61,227. He suggested that we look at our funds available and possibly transfer more funds to this account to make it grow quicker. Sandy stated we might need to schedule a Special Meeting to move the funds. At that time we could explain to the tax payers that most of the surplus is due to the high third party revenue collections. Sandy said that she thought she would feel comfortable transferring an extra \$50-60,000 to the truck fund. Ray asked if Jim could look into what new piece of apparatus we would need to purchase next and what it would potentially cost us, then let the board know at the October Special Meeting. Kim clarified with the board that a Special Meeting will be scheduled at 6:30 pm before our regular October 18th monthly meeting. The board agreed.

Jim made a motion to accept the Treasurer's Reports for May and June. Louise seconded it. The motion carried unanimously.

V. - Tax Collector's Report:

Taxes receivable balance as of today's date is \$524,729.53. This consists of the 2012 Tax Levy of \$444,076.59 and past due receivables of \$80,652.94.

Ray had asked at the last meeting for the totals of past due receivables at year-end for prior fiscal years to make a comparison to this year's figure. Kim stated that for fiscal year 2011/12 is was \$89,758.94, 2010/11 - \$91,654.24 and 2009/10 - \$89,215.13. So we are pretty consistent. The tax levies were \$441,703.69 for 2011 and \$446,182.96 for 2010.

Total tax revenue collected at year-end of fiscal year 2011-12 was \$449,577.98. Total past due receivables at year-end of fiscal year 2011-12 was \$86,758.94.

Kim then gave the revenue figures for May and June to match the reports presented by the Treasurer. Taxes collected in the month of May were \$11,377.26 and in June were \$9,341.07. Third party billing was healthy in the month of May at \$12,162.29 and in June at \$8,471.12.

An ad was placed in the Bargain Buyer this week stating that the fire district tax bills have been mailed.

We are trying to do a big push to increase our "Friends" on FaceBook, so please become our friend!

There was an article about the Chief in the 1st Responder magazine and in the new issue of the Gloucester Advocate. Ray wanted to thank Pvt. Linda Ferragamo and Kim for all the effort they put into having the dinner for Chief Pearson at Chester's. Everyone had a great time and it was well deserved by the Chief. The entire board agreed.

Louise made a motion to accept the Tax Collector's report. George seconded it. The motion carried unanimously.

VI. - Chief's Report:

The Chief expressed his Thanks from himself and Ruth for the sympathies expressed from everyone after the passing of her father. They sincerely appreciated it.

A thank you card was also received from Stephanie Kain for a floral arrangement that was sent to her after a recent hospital stay. George also thanked the board and stated that she is doing fine.

Another thank you card was received from Linda Noonan, wife of Pvt. Andy Noonan, for a floral arrangement sent after the passing of her sister.

Additionally, we received a thank you message via FaceBook from Kelly Kilmartin after we transported her mother to the hospital.

Over the summer we had some members of the department attend seminars. One was Stroke Emergency at RIH and the other was EMS Night at Kent Hospital.

Two grants were submitted over the summer. One to the Volunteer Firefighters Association (VFA) for wildland firefighting gear and equipment and the other was an Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG) for training materials.

Members of the department participated in the Gloucester Memorial Day Parade as well as the Northern RI Firemens League – Firemens Memorial. There is a photo on display of members of the Gloucester Honor Guard with our life member Milton Aldrich at that event. The Chief also mentioned that Deputy Chief Mike Segee is also in the photo, him being the President of the NRIFL this year. Ray asked that the Chief congratulate Deputy Chief Segee for his achievement on behalf of the board.

Chief Pearson presented the Gloucester Firefighter Scholarships this year at the Ponaganset High School Awards Night. 4 scholarships were awarded, with 3 of them being Harmony residents: Connor Mathieu, Taylor Bigwood and Wyatt Huston.

In July the Chief met with VFIS representative Brad Preston to do a policy review. He is now waiting for an analysis to come back. Personal injuries were also discussed at this meeting and Brad will look into this subject further as well. Ray mentioned that our liability insurance needs to be gone over for the directors and officers. There is a new level of fiduciary responsibility and we need to make sure everyone is covered. Ray also stated that the RI Foundation is sponsoring a series of lectures for all board members that might be of interest to everyone. He will forward the information to Kim and she can distribute it to the board.

The Chief stated that we are almost complete with our FCC compliance upgrades. They are mandated to be done by January 2013. The pagers have been received, but we are still waiting for the portable radios.

We also have a Probationary Class just finishing up. Ray commented that we have a lot of new, young people. The Chief agreed saying that it is a big batch with not a lot of experience and a bigger batch not coming from this area.

The Chief mentioned that he had been working closely with Attorney Mason to go over the permitting process for pyrotechnics. This was something new to our area. A detail will need to be at the event, paid for by the permittee.

George made a motion to accept the Chief's report. Louise seconded it. The motion carried unanimously.

VII. – Harmony Fire Department & Improvement Association Report:

No official report due to Linda's absence.

However, the Chief announced that the Oakland-Mapleville Fire Department Annual Muster will be held on Sunday, September 2nd this year. This is during Labor Day weekend as always. We should have a couple of teams participating.

He also mentioned that the new gym equipment purchased by the Association has now been installed.

Kim asked if the Board would be willing to reimburse the Association for ½ the cost of the dinner held in honor of Chief Pearson for recently obtaining the Presidency of the New England Association of Fire Chiefs. She thought it had been great to work together with them on the event, and it would be excellent to support such events on the districts part. All of the board members whole heartedly agreed.

A motion was made by George to reimburse the Association for ½ the total of Chester's bill, up to \$500. The motion was seconded by Louise, with Chief Pearson abstaining from the vote. The motion carried.

Kim also mentioned to the board that Deputy Chief Mike Segee also held the President's position for the Northern Rhode Island Firemen's League this year.

George made a motion congratulate Deputy Chief Segee for becoming President of the Northern Rhode Island Firemen's League. Jim seconded it. The motion carried unanimously.

VIII. - Committee Reports:

- a. Policies & Procedures Manual – Milton, Chair
Milt stated that it is a work in progress.
- b. Broadband Work Team – Milton & Stephen Kut, Co-Chairs
Renewed interested on behalf of the RIEDC. Will report more at the next meeting.
- c. Property Review Work Team – George & Louise, Co-Chairs
George has researched the abutting properties. None were on the tax sale list for the Town of Glocester. Attorney Mason will draft a letter of interest for the Work Team to send. Additionally, the Work Team will verbally approach the property owners Saturday, August 25th at 1:30pm.

IX. - Old Business:

- a. Update on RIDOT proposed Roadwork in Harmony.
No new information.

Some discussion was held regarding crew response, duty nights and additional per/diem shifts. There is a meeting scheduled for the three fire chiefs to meet on August 16th. The Chief will let them know that our board would like to schedule another meeting of the Chiefs and a representative from each of their district boards. Ray volunteered to be our board representative and they will report back to the board at our next monthly meeting.

Kim clarified that new items to be added to the Agenda next month under Old Business will be the Apparatus Review by Jim and District/Town-wide Coverage.

X. - New Business:

Jim wanted to thank everyone for their support during the recent passing of his wife Kasey's father.

Next he wanted to talk about Engine 23. He believes it is time to get rid of it. No one can drive it, parts are not available, it needs a new steering box and it will not pass a pump test. The Chief stated that it is not a trustworthy vehicle and the safety factor needs to be considered. Jim said he does not want to spend another \$.10 on it, it's not worth it in his opinion. He said he saw one similar to it recently go to auction and all they got was \$5,200 for it. Ray asked that he come back at the next meeting with more information on our options. He can add this information into his Apparatus Review report.

XI. - Public Input: No audience.

XII. – Executive Session: None called.

XIII. – Adjournment:

Jim made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Louise seconded it. The motion carried unanimously. The May meeting of the Harmony Fire District Executive Board was adjourned at **8:25 pm**.

The next regular monthly meeting of the Harmony Fire District Executive Board
is scheduled for **Thursday, 7:00 pm, September 20, 2012.**

Respectfully Submitted,



Kimberly S. Barber
Tax Collector/Clerk